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Baker Administration Acts to Embrace Transportation Innovation and Strengthen Public Safety

Legislation introduces statewide regulatory structure for transportation network companies (TNCs)

BOSTON – Governor Charlie Baker has filed legislation to institute a statewide regulatory framework for transportation network companies (TNCs) such as Uber, Lyft and Sidecar. “An Act Establishing Department of Public Utilities (DPU) Oversight of Transportation Network Companies” allows for the embrace of innovation in transportation, outlines strong standards for industry and consumer safety and moves to clarify the confusion and close the potential for gaps in insurance.

“Massachusetts has always been at the forefront of emerging technologies, with this legislation providing a modern regulatory framework to embrace innovation and protect and serve consumers,” **said Governor Baker**. “A diverse transportation network is key to our future economic growth and our collaboration will ensure customers have safe and reliable choices when they travel.”

The legislation was developed in consultation with municipal leaders, company representatives and public safety advocates.

“I thank the Baker Administration for taking a step forward in creating regulatory frameworks that incorporate transportation network companies into our existing for-hire transportation ecosystem,” **said Boston Mayor Martin J. Walsh**. “Over the past year, our Taxi Advisory Commission has closely studied the issues around creating diverse options for our consumers while maintaining the highest level of public safety. I look forward to the legislative process and am hopeful that we can move forward with regulations that place the safety of Boston's residents and visitors first.”

“This is good government at work, implementing commonsense standards that are in the best interest of both the public and businesses,” **said Somerville Mayor Joseph A. Curtatone.** “Balancing innovation with consumer protection is possible when we take a collaborative approach, and I want to thank Governor Baker for working with us and these new companies to put forth an equitable framework that will allow transportation service innovation to continue safely thriving in Massachusetts.”

“Governor Baker’s legislation will allow Uber to continue offering Massachusetts safe, reliable transportation options and opportunities to earn a living with greater flexibility,” **said Meghan Joyce, Uber East Coast General Manager.** “This bill would set into law for the entire industry many of the safety standards that have attracted riders and drivers to ride-sharing, including \$1 million of insurance on every ride and rigorous, mandatory background checks for all drivers. We thank Governor Baker and his administration for supporting riders and drivers and for promoting innovation in the Commonwealth.”

Key components of the legislation filed today include:

Modern Regulatory System: The Department of Public Utilities (DPU) will have the authority to develop and enforce a modern regulatory framework for TNC’s, allowing for collaboration between the state and municipalities and Uber, Lyft, Sidecar and other companies to support innovation and offer TNC services to Massachusetts residents and visitors under clear and safe guidelines.

Public Safety: In order to operate and carry passengers for hire, TNC drivers would be required to have a full state Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI) background check, with DPU developing disqualifying offenses in coordination with the Executive Office of Public Safety and Security (EOPSS). TNCs will also be responsible for vetting drivers through commercial, nationwide databases, keeping driver rosters updated and displaying clear external indicators on vehicles when operating as a TNC. The legislation also authorizes local law enforcement to run full CORI checks for livery drivers, creating the strongest state-level public safety checks in the nation.

Closing Insurance Gaps: The legislation seeks to clarify the current confusion around potential gaps in insurance for members of the public when traveling in a TNC vehicle. Massachusetts would be the first state to adopt standards negotiated in cooperation between insurers and TNCs, guaranteeing TNC vehicles will have \$1 million in minimum coverage as soon as a ride request is accepted.

Municipal Partnerships: The legislation would establish a municipal advisory group that includes the cities of Boston, Cambridge and Somerville to represent the

interests of cities and towns in DPU's work to establish public safety regulations.

Phase-In Period: The legislation allows for a phase-in of the law to ensure current operations are not disrupted as the framework and regulations are developed and finalized.

The legislation filed today follows Governor Baker's [direction to DPU in February](#) which provided a six month transitional period allowing TNC drivers to operate with private registration and insurance.

[Read "An Act Establishing Department of Public Utilities \(DPU\) Oversight of Transportation Network Companies"](#)

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